

VZCZCXRO6759  
RR RUEHAST  
DE RUEHVB #0837 1931353  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
R 121353Z JUL 06  
FM AMEMBASSY ZAGREB  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 6393  
INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE

UNCLAS ZAGREB 000837

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E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PREL HR REGIONAL ISSUES

SUBJECT: "CROATIA SUMMIT 2006" REAFFIRMS REGIONAL  
COMMITMENT TO EUROATLANTIC INTEGRATION AND SHARED  
VALUES

¶1. SUMMARY AND COMMENT: Prime Ministers of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro, Romania and Albania and the President of Georgia, plus representatives of NATO, the EU, the USG and leaders of international organizations attended the Croatia Summit 2006, devoted to "Completing Europe's Southern Dimension". PM Sanader and President Mesic hosted the regional gathering in historic Dubrovnik, where many speakers called on the EU and NATO to maintain a credible open-door policy as the only path to regional stability and security. NATO and EU officials called on the region to move more decisively in reforms. Southeast European leaders adopted a joint declaration highlighting the strong commitment of Southeast European countries to membership of the European Union and NATO. The GOC achieved its objectives with the summit, keeping the spotlight on regional aspirations and showcasing Croatia as a well-qualified candidate. The text of the declaration can be found at <http://www.croatiasummit2006.com/index.aspx?id=30>. END  
SUMMARY AND COMMENT

¶2. Participants maintained that the war, instability and extremism which characterized so much of the 1990s in southeastern Europe are things of the past. Most speakers emphasized that the future of the region is in the EU and NATO. PM Sanader noted "Croatia is completely aware that peace and security cannot be achieved through isolation. NATO, which has been recognized as the most successful alliance in history, should not be seen exclusively as a military alliance. [It] has been established and acts upon basic values - peace, freedom, democracy and free market economy." President Mesic strongly endorsed European values, saying that South-Eastern Europe had turned to the past too often and had repeated the same mistakes too many times. "Today, however, we are headed in the right direction, both politically and economically." Parliament Speaker Seks took a regional approach, asserting "Croatia wants to have a positive influence on the political and economic situation through the improvement of cross-border and regional cooperation. Full integration into Euro-Atlantic institutions is of vital importance for Southeast Europe." All three underlined that Croatia's accession to the EU and NATO was a national priority, and pointed out that Croatia, having made significant progress in Euro-Atlantic integration already, was willing to help neighboring countries which are at different degrees of association.

¶3. Officials from NATO, the EU and member states applauded the progress made to date, but told the regional leaders to be more decisive in reforms and integration, noting that mere geographic location is no longer sufficient to join the EU. Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly President Rene van der Linden,

warning that EU membership was not "automatic", called on the regional leaders to "Carry out your tasks first, and then you will receive our assistance."

Bradtke